

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed June 15, 2005 ("*Office Action*"). Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-13, 15, 17-20, and 23-27 were pending in the Application. The Examiner allows Claims 6, 7, 15, 19, 20, and 23-27; rejects Claims 1-4, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 17; and objects to Claims 10, 13, and 18. Applicant amends Claims 1 and 11 and cancels claims 10 and 13 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of Claims 6, 7, 15, 19, 20, and 23-27. The Examiner objects to Claims 10, 13, and 18 as depending upon a rejected base claim, but indicates that each of these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the respective base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the timely and favorable consideration of these claims.

To hasten issuance of currently allowable subject matter, Applicant amends independent Claim 1 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 10 and amends independent Claim 11 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 13. This places independent Claims 1 and 11 in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications. With these amendments, all independent claims are now in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications. Applicant thus respectfully requests that the Examiner issue a notice of allowance for all pending claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-4, 9, 11-12, 14, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,625,144 to El-Batal ("*El-Batal*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,543,654 to Jones ("*Jones*"). Applicant amends independent Claim 1 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 10 and amends independent Claim 11 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 13. This places independent Claims 1 and 11 in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications. Dependent Claims 2-4, 9, 11-12, 14, and 17 thus now depend from allowable claims. Applicant thus respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the claims.

Conclusion

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place the Application in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully requests full allowance of all pending claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of the Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicant stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

Applicant believes no fee is due; however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicant

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K-P' followed by a horizontal line.

Kurt M. Pankratz
Reg. No. 46,977

Date: September 14, 2005

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